

inside

Dear Readers:

As you frantically study for finals, complete your Christmas shopping and anxiously await the end of this school term, we with At Ease have already begun a new semester. And in our attempt to follow in the fine tradition of excellence set for us by our predecessors, we have started planning for the new year. But we have one more issue to complete before we head home for holidays.

We decided to devote this last issue to a timely, though merry, topic: Christmas. Our main story looks out for those students who won't be able to leave the Bryan-College Station area for the break. With most of Texas A&M's 39,000 students gone for the holidays, the place might resemble a ghost town, but there will still be plenty of activities to keep you occupied. The guide we've provided will busy you with more than you could possibly have time for.

Next we introduce you to the bearded man himself, or rather, themselves. We talked to several local Santas and asked them why they trade their everyday faces for once-a-year whiskers. Their reasons vary, but they share a common Christmas spirit as they go that extra step to bring joy to children's lives.

Christmas tree harvesting is actually a way of life for some, and a rather lucrative one at that. These evergreens provide more than holiday sparkle, as is described in this article.

We didn't want to complete this issue without shedding light on a different December tradition: that of Hanukkah. As many in the area celebrate this time of year in the Jewish tradition, we've provided a brief history of the tradition.

Finally, this week's Aggienizing Answers columnist ventured out among the student body and asked grown-up college students the age-old question: What do you want for Christmas this year? Not many people still yearn for their two front teeth, but some of their wish lists include familiar favorites.

From all of us here with At Ease to all of you out in Aggieland, good luck on finals and have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

At Ease Staff

Editor
Assistant editor
Senior staff writer
Staff writers

Movie Reviewer
Music Reviewer
Photographer

Lydia Berzsenyi
Lee Schexnaider
Staci Finch
Leslie Guy
Lawson Reilly
Matt Stewart
Shane Hall
Eric Swellander

Holiday hum-drum _____ 8

Are you moping over the fact that you'll be spending most or all of the Christmas holidays in College Station? Are you worried that you won't have anything to do once finals are over and most College Station residents disappear? Never fear. We're here to give you some top-notch suggestions to make your vacation both productive and fun.

Jolly ol' St. Nick _____ 6

Santa Claus is one of children's all-time favorites, with his jolly laugh, white beard and soft tummy. But who really is the man in the red suit? We talked to several local Santas to find out why they enjoy their unusual job.

Oh, Christmas tree _____ 10

Most people associate Christmas trees only with their livingroom's yuletide decorations. But for some, Christmas trees are a day-by-day business. Read on to discover all the merits of these holiday pines.

Hanukkah happenings _____ 10

December marks a special time for both Christians and non-Christians alike. Since the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah will begin soon, this article describes the occasion.

Aggienizing Answers _____ 11

With Christmas right around the corner and your parents probably farther away, we figured you might appreciate the chance to tell someone what you want for Christmas, even though our reporter did not sit these students on his lap to ask their wish lists.

Movie review _____ 4

"Three Men and a Baby" is a funny movie with an insightful look into the headaches of baby care. And even though this is the third baby movie of the year, Matt says its worth seeing.

Album reviews _____ 4

Traditional country music is back with "Lucky 7" by Freddie Steady's Wild Country. And folk/new age music fans are in for a treat with Eliza Gilkyson's album "Pilgrims." Shane says that both of these must-buys top the year's list of hit albums.